

Internal Discouragement (Nehemiah 4:10-23)

Proposition: We as builders for God must be aware of internal discouragements and respond to internal encouragements as shown in Nehemiah chapter 4.

- I. The ^{Sources} ~~Seuses~~ of Discouragement
 - A. Their Strength was Depleted (Vs 10a)
 - B. Their Vision had disappeared (Vs. 6, 10b)
 - C. Their Confidence was Deflated (Vs. 11-12)
- II. The Strategy for Encouragement
 - A. A Common Finish (Vs. 13)
 - B. A Unified Focus (Vs. 14)
 - C. A Balanced Formation (Vs. 15-17)
 - D. An Others Function (Vs. 19-21)

Internal Discouragement (Nehemiah 4:10-23)

We saw in the last chapter how the enemy can raise his ugly head to try to put an end to the progress of God. That was an external discouragement.

But Satan's most effectual progress deterrents are not necessarily from without. Some of His greatest are from within. Internal discouragements are more subtle than an all out outward assault yet they are no less effective. When Satan can't get in from the front he'll come in at the back. After outward temptations didn't work on Jesus, they gave Judas. When the early church was not brought down by persecut

I. Their Strength Was Depleted vs 10

Judas, one of the workers and laborers one of these that had a mind to work now saw their strength was depleted!

It had decayed. They had run out of physical strength. This is a very real source of discouragement. Physical weakness. Physical rest is essential to not only the work of daily living but for Kingdom

work. In Mark 6 after disciples return from their commission work for the Lord, He took one look at them and said (MK 6:31)

Voice haulers said 'If you don't come apart and rest you'll come apart.'

I. Their Vision had Disappeared
(vs 10, 6) The people started out with a mind to work. Their heart was in it. And seemingly over night the wall grew to a half-way point. But when physical fatigue hit the lost sight of their vision of the strong towering walls. They were believing the enemy's threats. The half way point is a point of great difficulty. You lose sight of what has already been accomplished because you are looking at what still lies ahead. When I ran the mile (4 laps) I wanted to quit at lap 2. Are you at lap 2 in Christian experience, lost zeal?

II. Their Confidence was Deflated (11-13)
In the early part of the chapter they boldly continued their labors despite the saber rattling of the enemy. But the coming again and again and again of the enemy has caused the intimidation to rub off on them. (3) One of the things that... They began to lose confidence and their heart of faith and fullness became infiltrated by fatigue and fear. In the midst of your labors have you lost confidence. Have the whispers of the enemy caused discouragement? Now you know the sources of discouragement. But now Nehemiah give a strategy for Encouragement.

IV. A Common Finish - vs 13 The original

- 1) ...by persecution there became internal struggles that attempted to bring down the church. Ananias and Sapphira and the Grecian widows caused turmoil internally in the church. We as builders for God must be aware of internal discouragements and respond to internal encouragements as shown in Nehemiah

4. Notice first the sources of discouragement

- 2) Mark 6:31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while...

- 3) One of the things that facilitated the Nazi rise to power in Germany was a propaganda that was called 'the big lie'. It was simply this: if you told a big enough lie enough times, people would start to believe it. That's exactly what happened in Nazi Germany, and later spreading across the whole of Europe. One lie they told everybody was that the Jew was many notches down from other white Caucasian human beings. People started, intelligent scientists, even theologians, started to believe the lie because it was a big one and it was told often enough. If I can make this illustration: if you're in the work of the Lord, whatever capacity you may be in it, if people come again and again and again and discourage you, eventually it rubs off.

I) ... by persecution there became internal struggles that attempted to bring down the church. Ananias and Sapphira and the Greco-Roman world turmoil internally in the church. We as builders for God must be aware of internal discouragements and respond to internal encouragements as shown in Nehemiah's notice first the source of discouragement.

2) Mark 6:31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart

- 1) ...war zone. It should be a place of love, blessing and maximum encouragement. This is a hard world we live in and home should be a safe haven of peace and shelter. What of we as a church are our families united in serving the Lord? Psalms 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

3) One of the things that facilitated the Nazi rise to power in Germany was a propaganda that was called "The Big Lie". It was simply this: if you told a big enough lie enough times, people would start to believe it. That's exactly what happened in Nazi Germany and later spreading across the whole of Europe. One lie they told everybody was that the Jew was many notches down from other white Caucasian human beings. People

- 2) 2 Chronicles 20:12 O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

the Lord, whatever capacity you may be in it, it begins to come again and again and again and again and eventually it runs

working strategy had families separated and working all over town. Nehemiah reorganized the labor force back into families. Husbands were encouraged by wives, fathers encouraged children on their objective was the portion of the wall before their home. When the enemy attacked there was not the question where's my family? They were all in it together and they fought for and labored for one another. Nehemiah was able to turn their attention from the threats of the enemy and self pity to family defence. Our home should not be a war zone D

V. A Unified Focus - VS 14. Can you imagine how discouraging these intended profiles must have been to Nehemiah. But Nehemiah must have done what David did in 1 Sam 30:6 when Ziklag was attacked and all the women & children taken. David encouraged himself in the Lord. Nehemiah took that encouragement and gave it to the people. These people had had their eye on the enemy and on their selves which will discourage anyone. "Remember the Lord" Get your eyes off of Goliath and get them on God! He is great and one to be feared. Jehoshaphat in 2 Chron 20:18. As a church let's get our eyes upon Christ. We have no ^{strength} ^{He does} the

VI. A Balanced Foundation - (VS 15-17)
There must be a balance in our efforts

for God. Nehemiah had to balance between building and battling. He may have had some that all they wanted to do was fight. Ever met Christians like that. Then there may have been some that all they wanted to do was build and never take a stand for anything. Nehemiah equaled them out. Half worked half guarded. Every worker had work in one hand a weapon in the other. Don't be so vigilant you never get anything done for God. Don't be so hard a worker that you are vulnerable to the enemy. John Wycliffe was a builder

VII. An Others Function. (19-21)

Psychologist & therapists will tell you one of the best things you can do for depression & discouragement is to go out and do something for someone else! Nehemiah is saying that when you hear the sound of attack all of us ought to come running to defend our neighbor.

VS 14 He said remember you are fighting for your brethren... Nehemiah is saying that we are to rally around one another in times of distress. Often in times of discouragement what we need is the encouragement of a Christian brother or sister. And being an encouragement takes

VIII. Closing

Are you disheartened by the labor that lies ahead. Look to Jesus Draw strength from family, his blessing...

1) ...was a builder and a battler. As a builder he produced the first English translation of the Bible. As a battler, he was burned at the stake for his work on the Bible. As a battler, John Bunyan was imprisoned three times for preaching the gospel. As a builder he penned his classic book, Pilgrim's Progress.

2) ...takes the focus off us and places it on others.